

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of all grounds of rejection are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks. Claims 1, 2, 4-9, and 11-12 were rejected. By entry of this amendment, claims 1, 11, and 12 have been amended and claims 13-16 have been added. Consequently, claims 1, 2, 4-9, and 11-16 are pending in this application. No new matter has been added.

Objections

The amendments to claim 12 overcome the Examiner's objections related to new matter and antecedent basis. Further, the amendments to the specification correct misspellings and insert section headings as suggested by the Examiner.

Rejections under 35 USC § 112

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 11 has been amended to overcome this rejection. In claim 11, the steering of the wheels and the marine propulsion unit steering are arranged to be operated simultaneously using the power assisted steering element. Because the wheels and the marine propulsion unit both use the same power assisted steering element, any power assistance provided to the steering of the wheels matches the power assistance provided to the marine propulsion unit steering. Further, as described in paragraphs [0003] and [0004], the passage of water through a jet nozzle will tend to center the nozzle. As stated in paragraph [0004], the power assistance provided to the marine propulsion unit steering is balanced to overcome this self centering tendency and keeps the marine propulsion unit in the steered position. The Applicant believes that this feature of the invention is adequately and clearly explained or described in the disclosure.

Further, neither Gere nor Caserta disclose, teach, or suggest a power assisted steering

element, much less a power assisted steering element that simultaneously steers retractable wheels and a marine propulsion unit such that the power assistance to the steering of the wheels matches the power assistance required to overcome the self centering tendency of the marine propulsion unit when running at high speed. As such, claim 11 is believed to be patentable over these references and is in condition for allowance.

Claim 12 was rejected under 35 USC 35 USC § 112, first paragraph, for failing to comply with the written description requirement. The amendments to claim 12 overcome this rejection. Further, claim 12 recites that the steering of the retractable wheels and the marine propulsion unit steering are arranged to be operated simultaneously using a hydraulically powered rack and pinion steering system. Neither Gere nor Caserta disclose, teach, or suggest a power assisted steering system, much less a hydraulically powered rack and pinion steering system that simultaneously steers retractable wheels and a marine propulsion unit. As such, claim 12 is believed to be patentable over these references and is in condition for allowance.

Rejections under 35 USC § 103(a)

Claims 1, 2, and 4-7 were rejected as being unpatentable over Gere et al. (US 5,590,617), in view of Caserta et al. (US 5,727,494).

Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1, as amended, is patentable over the Gere and Caserta references because features of the claim are not disclosed, taught, or suggested in the references. For example, amended claim 1 recites that the retractable wheels are arranged to be steered by a *power assisted* steering element and that the steering of the retractable wheels and the marine propulsion unit steering are arranged to be operated *simultaneously using the same power assisted steering element*. Neither Gere nor Caserta disclose, teach, or suggest a power assisted steering element. Gere discloses a rack and pinion steering system and Caserta discloses a steer-by-wire steering system, neither of which are power assisted. Because these types of steering arrangements are not power assisted, they are unsuitable for high speed planing amphibious vehicles, where the force required to steer the marine propulsion unit is high. (US

2006/0219146, paragraph [0001]).

Further, in claim 1, the steering of the retractable wheels and the marine propulsion unit steering are arranged to be operated *simultaneously using the same power assisted steering element*. The Applicant believes that it would impractical, if not impossible, for one skilled in the art to modify the steering arrangements in Gere and Caserta to add simultaneous power assisted steering of retractable wheels and a marine propulsion unit. As such, it would not be obvious to one skilled in the art to combine a power assisted steering system with the steering arrangement in Gere or Caserta, or any combination of Gere and Caserta, to produce a power assisted steering system that simultaneously steers retractable wheels and a marine propulsion unit.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is patentable over the cited references. Claims 2 and 4-7 are patentable over the cited references at least based on direct or indirect dependence on claim 1 and are in condition for allowance.

Claim 8 was rejected as being unpatentable over Gere et al. (US 5,590,617), in view of Caserta et al. (US 5,727,494) with respect to claim 1, and further in view of Bufler Ernst (DE 3820967 A1).

Applicant respectfully submits that claim 8 is patentable over the cited references. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is patentable over the cited references. Therefore, claim 8 is patentable over the cited references at least based on direct dependence on claim 1 and is in condition for allowance.

Claim 9 was rejected as being unpatentable over Gere et al. (US 5,590,617), in view of Caserta et al. (US 5,727,494) with respect to claim 1.

Applicant respectfully submits that claim 9 is patentable over the cited references. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is patentable over the cited references. Therefore,

claim 9 is patentable over the cited references at least based on direct dependence on claim 1 and is in condition for allowance.

New Claims 13-16

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 13 and 14 are patentable over the Gere and Caserta references. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is patentable over the cited references. Therefore, claims 13 and 14 are patentable over the cited references at least based on direct or indirect dependence on claim 1 and are in condition for allowance. Support for claim 13 can be found in paragraph [0017] of the application. Support for claim 14 can be found in paragraphs [0003] and [0004] of the application.

Applicant respectfully submits that claim 15 is patentable over the Gere and Caserta references. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 12 is patentable over the cited references. Claim 12 recites that the steering of the retractable wheels and the marine propulsion unit steering are arranged to be operated simultaneously using a hydraulically powered rack and pinion steering system. Neither Gere nor Caserta disclose, teach, or suggest a power assisted steering system, much less a hydraulically powered rack and pinion steering system that simultaneously steers retractable wheels and a marine propulsion unit. As such, claim 12 is believed to be patentable over these references and is in condition for allowance. Therefore, claim 15 is patentable over the cited references at least based on direct dependence on claim 12 and is in condition for allowance. Support for claim 15 can be found in paragraphs [0003], [0004], and [0017] of the application.

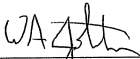
Applicant respectfully submits that claim 16 is patentable over the Gere and Caserta references. Claim 16 recites that the steering of the retractable wheels and the marine propulsion unit steering are arranged to be operated simultaneously using a hydraulically powered rack and pinion steering system such that the power assistance to the steering of the wheels provided by the steering system matches the power assistance required to overcome the self centering tendency of the marine propulsion unit when running at high speed. Neither Gere nor Caserta

disclose, teach, or suggest this limitation. As such, claim 16 is believed to be patentable over these references and is in condition for allowance. Support for claim 16 can be found in paragraphs [0003], [0004], and [0017] of the application.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims of this application are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims of this application is respectfully solicited. Furthermore, if the Examiner believes that additional discussions or information might advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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William A. Johnston
(Reg. No.: 47,687)

CALFEE, HALTER & GRISWOLD LLP
1400 KeyBank Center
800 Superior Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44114-2688
Phone (216) 622-8576
Fax (216) 241-0816

Customer No. 24024